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OSA 2222-62

15 November 1962

MEMORANDUM FOR: Executive Assistant/Deputy Director (Research)

SUBJECT : First-Class Air Travel for OSA

1. Enjoying the nebulous position which I now fill, I take this opportunity to appeal to you to bring to bear on Dr. Scoville whatever pressures you can to insure continued first-class travel for OSA personnel. Being somewhat removed from OSA, yet very much a part of it, I feel that I can write this with some objectivity as well as understanding. I realize that this problem may not necessarily be "my cup of tea"; however, I prevail upon you to hear me out. I understand that Colonel Ledford plans to reply to Dr. Scoville on this same subject. Being somewhat of an odd member organizationally, I feel that my response can be directed to you without circumventing command channels.

2. I would recommend strongly that you grant the OSA personnel the license to travel first class either inside or outside the continental limits of the United States. I recommend this not because OSA personnel are of any particular breed, but I think that their functions and duties are particularly peculiar to those of other Agency divisions and components. It has often been joked that OSA's cab fare more often than not exceeds the entire budget of other area divisions. As humorous as this may be, there is a great deal of truth in it. By its very nature and philosophy, OSA has always been a traveling organization. The travel involved, however, is not like the normal junketeering and boondoggling associated with a great deal of "official" trips. I think I can speak with a fair amount of experience not only from the traveling that I have done for OSA but also the traveling which I have witnessed for the rest of the Agency during my tenure as Chief of the Central Processing Branch. There is no question that the travel associated with a staging operation as pleasurable as it may be in itself, is a grueling experience when added to the long hours and sleepless nights which most people experience during such an operation. By the same token, the travel of our personnel, especially Development and Contracts types, are woven into a fairly tight schedule.

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The change of times between here and the West Coast usually permits a full day's work on each end following travel during the night. It is fairly difficult as it is now to take the Redeye in from the West Coast and report for work at nine o'clock in the morning while blessed with first-class accommodations; I would hate to see the ship of state following a journey via the narrow and confined tourist class accommodations.

3. I would also like to comment, if I may, on the amount of work performed by the personnel as a whole in OSA. I do not think it would be difficult to correctly speculate that there is more uncompensated overtime performed in OSA than any other component in the Agency. History would attest to this when one considers the volume of operations which have been conducted from this office during the evening and week end hours. I feel that it is little compensation to grant OSA personnel the privilege of riding first class during the few moments of leisure captured during a plane trip.

4. I would readily agree that tourist travel might be tolerable during a PCS move since the traveler, if fortunate, may have the opportunity to rest upon arrival; and then again, the trip is a one-timer for at least another two years. But when one considers the amount of TDY traveling done by OSA, it would be nothing less than brutal to require tourist accommodations. As I said before, our philosophy of research and development is to pick the best contractor, excuse him from the laborious, costly and time-consuming reports normally required in Government contracts, but rely on a close association with the contractor by monitoring his progress through frequent visits. This type of development has been extremely successful to date, and there is no indication that it will not continue to be successful in the future.

5. Traveling is not only fundamental in our development, but in the conduct of our operations as well. Staging is a way of life with our detachment personnel, plus the support personnel sent from Headquarters. Operations are usually conducted at a fast pace, night and day, and historically in very remote bases with substandard facilities. To insist that whatever commercial air travel there may be, go via tourist class

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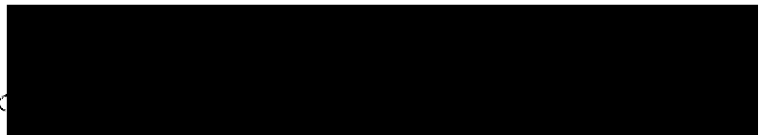
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is really rubbing the salt in. To go one step further, while there may be a tear in your eye, the only palatable portion of a courier trip is those few hours one gets to sit in a big jet seat, following eighteen to twenty hours baby sitting some film, is the aft end of a MATS aircraft.

6. I am tempted to project this argument further in an attempt to extricate the Government employee from the second-class citizen which the bureaucracy of Government would want bestowed upon him. The meager amounts which will be saved at the expense of the Government employee can only remind me of the emphasis on the dimes while the dollars go jumping out the windows. So be it.

7. I realize that you did not ask for all this, but I feel that I had to say something and if nothing else, at least my psychosis has been served.



JOHN N. McMAHON

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